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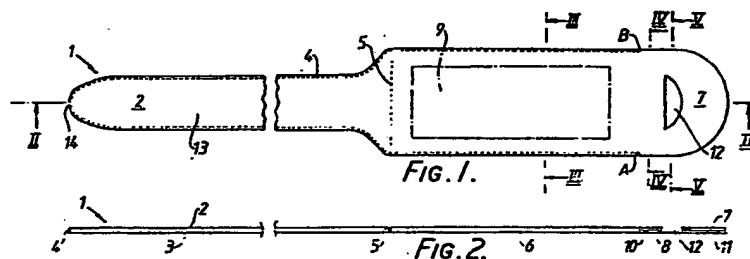
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(54) Identity band

(57) An identity band for hospital use comprises two sheets of e.g. soft PVC (2, 3) joined by a peripheral weld (4) to form a strap (13) and a pocket (6) for an identity card (9). The ends of the sheets form flaps (7, 8) which can be separated to insert the card (9). One flap is coated with adhesive which is covered by two cover strips (10, 11). After the card (9) is inserted the cover strip (10) is removed and the flaps (7, 8) are sealed together by the exposed adhesive to close the pocket in a watertight manner. The strap is then put around the wrist or ankle of a patient and the end inserted between the flaps (7, 8) and out through an aperture (12) in the flap (7). The cover strip (11) is then removed and the exposed adhesive used to secure the strap.



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SPECIFICATION

Identity band

5 This invention relates to an identity band of a type suitable for use in a hospital. It is common practice to provide patients in hospitals and the like with one or more identity bands bearing the name of the patient. Such bands are intended to be permanently secured to the patient, i.e., they are not readily removable, and preferably cannot be removed without permanently damaging the band.

An identity of this type is illustrated in B8 1538105. The identity band described in this patent has enjoyed wide commercial success, but suffers from the significant disadvantage that the pocket which contains the name card is not fully sealed against the ingress of liquid, and accordingly unless care is taken during ablutions the name card is exposed to water and is accordingly soiled. British patent 1056724 illustrates an identity band having a pocket which may be closed by means of an adhesive flap, but again the closure of the pocket is not complete and water may seep into the pocket. Further, the arrangement shown in GB 1056724 is relatively complex to manufacture, and is liable to be uncomfortable in use because the pocket closure flap, when in operative position, presents a sharp edge to the skin of the patient, the sharp edge being located proud of the general plane of the inner surface of the band.

According to one aspect of the present invention there is provided an identity band comprising: two sheets of flexible plastics material secured together to define an elongate pocket having an open end and a closed, said sheets of plastics material extending beyond the open end of the pocket to define a pair of flaps at one end region of the band; a strap extending from the closed end of the pocket to the other end of the band; means for sealing the flaps to each other in a zone adjacent the open end of the pocket to seal the pocket closed in a substantially water-tight manner; and securing means on said one end region for securing the strap to the said one end region after the identity band has been located about the wrist or ankle of a user to maintain the identity band permanently in position.

The present invention overcomes the problems outlined above by providing a pocket which can, after a name card has been inserted, be sealed in a substantially water-tight manner without the use of a flap which executes a reverse bend and presents a sharp edge to the inner surface of the band.

The means of securing the identity bands of the prior art in position have not proved wholly satisfactory. In the case of the bands shown in GB 1538105 the provision of a press-fastener type fitting is relatively expensive, and produces a relatively bulky and inconvenient fastening. In the case of GB 1056724 a potentially more convenient fastening means is shown. However, in order to produce a workable embodiment of this system the strap must be of relatively stiff material to enable it to be reliably thrust through the passage provided. The use of such a stiff material tends to render the

identity band uncomfortable to wear.

In the preferred embodiment of the present invention one of the flaps is provided with an aperture so that the flaps may be separated and the strap inserted between the flaps and through the aperture. Adhesive means are provided for securing the strap to one of the flaps after the strap has been positioned. Since the flaps may be separated to gain immediate access to the aperture, the strap can be readily threaded through the aperture not withstanding that it is made of a relatively soft material which is comfortable to the wearer. The adhesive means preferably bonds the flaps together on either side of the strap to form a neat and secure fastening.

The sealing means for sealing the pocket closed and the adhesive means for securing the strap can preferably be provided by a coating of adhesive material formed on one of the flaps and covered by first and second coverings of readily released material. In use, an identity card is inserted into the pocket and the covering on the adhesive adjacent the mouth of the pocket is removed to allow the pocket to be sealed shut. The identity band is then placed about the wrist or ankle of a wearer and the strap threaded through the aperture. The cover is then removed from the remaining area of adhesive, and the flaps pressed firmly together to secure to the adhesive covered flap to the strap and the other flap.

The above and further features and advantages of the present invention will become clear from the following description of a preferred embodiment thereof, given by way of example only, reference being had to the accompanying drawings wherein:

Figure 1 is a plan view of an embodiment of the present invention;

Figures 2-5 are sections of the lines II-II to V-V of Figure 1 respectively; and

Figures 6 and 7 are views corresponding to the right-hand portion of Figure 2 and showing respectively the method of inserting a name card and securing the band in position.

The identity band 1 shown in the drawings comprises first and second sheets 2, 3 of flexible plastics material. The sheets 2, 3 are co-extensivge and are secured together, e.g. by means of heat sealing, along a peripheral zone which extends from the point A clockwise around the band to the point B. The sheet 2, 3 are further joined, e.g. by means of heat sealing, along a transverse line 5 so as to define a pocket 6 which is open to the right (as viewed in Figures 1 and 2) but is closed on all remaining sides.

The sheets 2, 3 extend to the right of the pocket mouth in the form of two flaps 7, 8. The flaps 7, 8 form one end region of the band, and are not joined together by a peripheral seal in the manner of the rest of the band. Thus, the flaps 7, 8 can be separated as shown in Figure 6 to permit a card 9 upon which has been written the name of the user or some other information to be inserted easily into the pocket 6. At least the upper sheet of plastics material 2 is transparent so that the card 9 is visible through the material of the first sheet 2. A

typical card 9 is shown in chain dotted lines in Figure 1, although it should be understood that the identity band 1 will normally be supplied without a card 9 fitted in the pocket 6.

- 5 The upper flap 7 is provided on the entire surface thereof which faces the lower flap 8 with a coating of suitable pressure sensitive adhesive. The adhesive as been omitted from the drawings in the interests of clarity. The adhesive is covered
10 by two separate readily removable cover strips 10, 11, the strip 10 extending from the mouth of the pocket 6 to the left-hand edge of a generally D-shaped aperture 12 formed in the flap 7, and the strip 11 covering the remainder of the flap 7.
15 The generally D-shaped aperture 12 is sized to receive a strap portion 13 of the identity band which extends from the transverse line 5 to the free end 14 of the band.

In use, the name of a patient or such other information as is required is written on a card 9, and the card 9 is inserted fully into the pocket 6 by lifting the upper flaps 7 as illustrated in Figure 6. When the card 9 has been fully inserted into the pocket 6 cover strip 10 is removed and the flaps 7, 25 8 are firmly pressed together in order to seal the flaps to each other in the transverse zone extending from the imaginary line A-B to the left-hand edge of the aperture 12. Since the entire surface of the flap 7 is coated with adhesive in this zone, the effect of sealing with flaps together is to close the mouth of the pocket 6 in a substantially water-tight manner. The term "substantially water-tight" is used since if the identity band is subject to prolonged soaking or elevated water pressure it is possible that water will seep into the pocket 6. However, in normal use the seal provided by the adhesive layer should prevent the ingress of any significant quantity of water to the pocket 6.

After sealing the pocket 6 as described above the identity band is wrapped around the wrist or ankle of a user with the written information on the card 9 visible. The end of the flap 7 is then lifted away from the flap 8 as illustrated in Figure 7 and the end 14 of the strap 13 is inserted through the aperture 12. The free end 14 is then pulled to locate the band snugly around the wrist or ankle of the user, and the remaining cover strip 11 is removed. The flap 7 is then pressed firmly against the underlying flap 8 and strap 13 to adhesively secure the flaps 7, 50 8 to each other, and to adhesively secure the surface of the strap 13 to the flap 7. Finally, if desired, the projecting portion of the strap 13 is cut off and discarded.

In the preferred embodiment of the invention both the upper and lower sheets 2, 3 are made from a non-toxic hospital quality plasticised P.V.C. material and the adhesive layer is provided by means of a hospital approved adhesive tape, the release strips preferably being of polyethylene. Since the strap 13 may readily be inserted through the aperture 12 by virtue of the ability to separate the flaps 7, 8 as illustrated in Figure 7, no great stiffness is required from the strap 13, and accordingly the entire identity band can be made of a relatively soft material which is comfortable to wear for pro-

longed periods.

- It will be observed that the only discontinuity provided in the interior annular surface of the identity band, when secured in position, is that caused by the free edge of the lower flap 8. Since the sheet material will be relatively thin and highly flexible, this discontinuity should not irritate the wearer. In this context, it will be noted that the free edge of the lower flap 8 is curved and accordingly does not present a single transverse line to irritate the skin. Further, the lower flap will be firmly bonded to the upper flap on either side of the strap 13, and this will tend to reduce the possibility that the above described identity band can readily be manufactured by an automated process.

CLAIMS

1. An identity band comprising: two sheets of flexible plastics material secured together to define an elongate pocket having an open end and a closed end, said sheets of plastics material extending beyond the open end of the pocket to define a pair of flaps at one end region of the band; a strap extending from the closed end of the pocket to the other end of the band; means for sealing the flaps to each other in a zone adjacent the open end of the pocket to seal the pocket closed in a substantially water-tight manner; and securing means on said one end region for securing the strap to the said one end region after the identity band has been located about the wrist or ankle of a user to maintain the identity band permanently in position.
2. An identity band according to claim 1 wherein one of the flaps is provided with an aperture sized to receive the strap and located so that, after the flaps have been sealed to each other in the zone adjacent the open end of the pocket, the flaps may be separated in the zone of the aperture to permit the strap to be inserted between the flaps and through the aperture.
3. An identity band according to claim 2 wherein the aperture is D-shaped.
4. An identity band according to claim 2 or claim 3 wherein the other of the flaps is imperforate.
5. An identity band according to any of claims 1 to 4 wherein the securing means comprises adhesive on one of the flaps for securing the strap to the adhesive covered flap and for securing the adhesive covered flap to the other flap.
6. An identity band according to any preceding claim wherein the means for sealing the flaps to each other in a zone adjacent the open end of the pocket comprises adhesive provided on one of the flaps.
7. An identity band according to any of claims 2 to 4 wherein the apertured flap is coated, on the face thereof adjacent the other flap, with a pressure sensitive adhesive, said adhesive being covered with two readily removable coverings, the first covering being removable to expose an area of adhesive located between the open end of the pocket and the aperture which, when exposed, can adhere to the other flap to seal the pocket closed,

and the second covering being removable to expose the remainder of the adhesive for use as the securing means.

5 8. An identity band according to any preceding claim wherein the two sheets of plastics material are substantially coextensive and are secured together to form the strap.

9. An identity band according to claim 8 wherein the sheets of plastic are secured together
10 by a peripheral seal which extends from the edges of the opening of the pocket, along the edges of the pocket and the strap to the free end of the strap.

10. An identity band according to any preceding
15 claim wherein the plastics material is a hospital quality plasticised PVC.

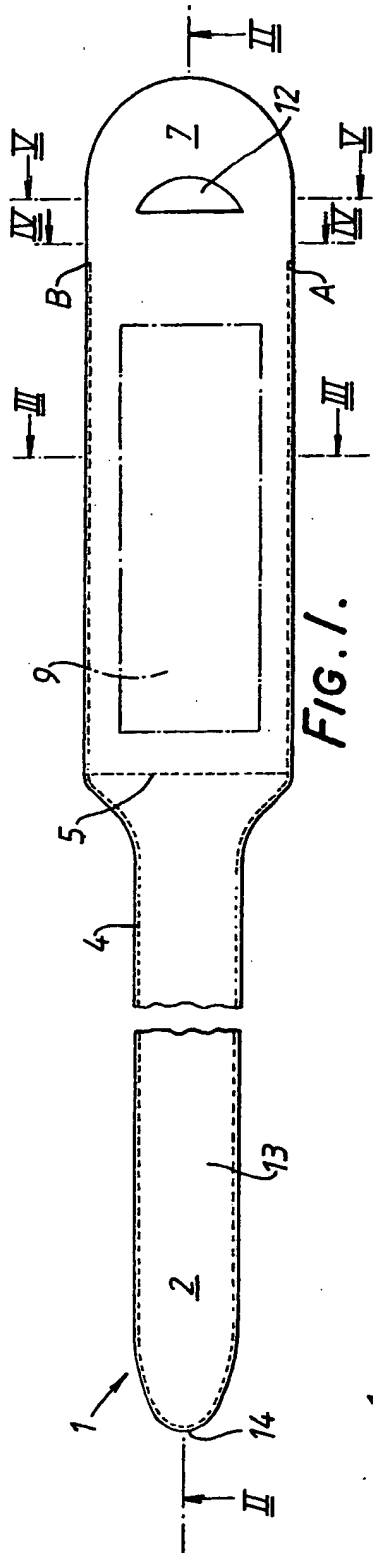


FIG. 1.

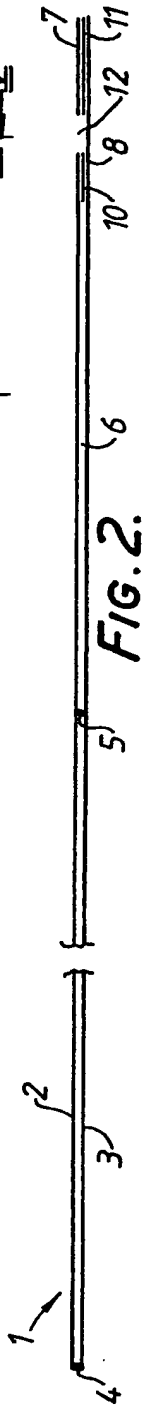


FIG. 2.

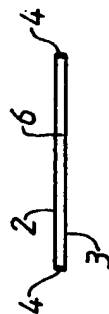


FIG. 3.

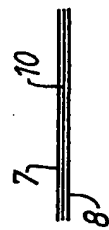


FIG. 4.



FIG. 5.

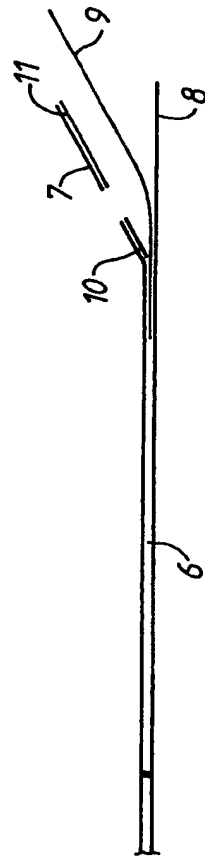


FIG. 6.

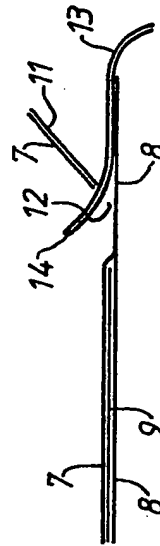


FIG. 7.